

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): ~~The~~ A personal identification apparatus ~~according to~~
~~claim 1, comprising:~~

a storage device configured to store specific information pieces of a plurality of
registered persons in order;

an extraction device configured to extract a specific information piece of an object
person to be identified from a feature of the object person;

an identification device configured to identify the object person from the registered
persons by comparing the specific information pieces of the registered persons with the
specific information piece of the object person; and

a registered information operation device configured to sort the specific information
pieces of the registered persons, which is stored in said storage device, in order of increasing
elapse time from a last identification of the object person or in order of decreasing frequency
of identification thereof,

wherein when said identification device fails identification between the object person
and one of the registered persons, said extraction device extracts another specific information
piece of the object person which presents at a lower-order position than the specific
information piece extracted from the object person, and said identification device compares
the another specific information piece with the specific information piece of each of the
registered persons to verify the specific information piece.

Claims 5-16 (Canceled).

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): ~~The~~ A personal identification apparatus according to claim 1, comprising:

a storage device configured to store specific information pieces of a plurality of registered persons in order;

an extraction device configured to extract a specific information piece of an object person to be identified from a feature of the object person;

an identification device configured to identify the object person from the registered persons by comparing the specific information pieces of the registered persons with the specific information piece of the object person; and

a registered information operation device configured to sort the specific information pieces of the registered persons, which is stored in said storage device, in order of increasing elapse time from a last identification of the object person or in order of decreasing frequency of identification thereof,

wherein said identification device performs verification for only information pieces at higher-order positions in accordance with the order of sorted information pieces.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said identification device performs retry by comparing information present at a lower-order position in said storage device with the specific information piece of the object person when said identification device fails verification between the specific information pieces stored in said storage device and the specific information piece extracted in said ~~aid~~ extraction device.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said identification device calculates a similarity between each of a given number of information

pieces read out from said storage device and the specific information piece of the object person to obtain a plurality of similarities, and selects a maximum similarity from the similarities to obtain an identification result.

Claims 20-21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said identification device performs retry by collating a feature extracted newly by extraction device with each of features of the specific information pieces read out from storage device when said identification device fails verification between the specific information pieces stored in said storage device and the specific information piece extracted by said extraction device.

Claims 23-25 (Canceled)

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): ~~The~~ A personal identification method according to claim 24, comprising:

storing specific information pieces of a plurality of registered persons in order in a storage device;

extracting a specific information piece of an object person from the object person;

identifying the object person by comparing the specific information pieces of the registered persons, with the specific information piece of the object person, and

sorting the specific information pieces of the registered persons in the storage device, in order of increasing elapse time from a last identification of the object person or in order of decreasing frequency of identification thereof,

which includes, when the identifying fails, performing retry operation of the identifying using the specific information piece of the object person, or another specific information piece of the object person, which presents at a lower-order position than the specific information extracted for the object person from the object person.

Claim 27 (Canceled).